Clean Version of the Amended Claims

1.   (Amended) A method of coding a speech signal, the method comprising the steps of:

accumulating samples of the speech signal over a sampling duration to provide accumulated samples;

evaluating the accumulated samples to obtain a representative sample;

determining whether a slope of the representative sample conforms to a defined characteristic slope stored in a reference database of spectral characteristics; and

selecting a value of a coding parameter, for coding the speech signal, based on the determining step.

4.   (Amended) The method according to claim 1 where the evaluating comprises averaging the accumulated samples over the sampling duration to obtain the representative sample.

24.   (Amended) A system for coding a speech signal, the system comprising:

a buffer memory for accumulating samples of the speech signal over a sampling duration to provide accumulated samples;

an evaluator adapted to evaluate the accumulated samples to obtain a representative sample and to make a determination whether a slope of the representative sample of the speech signal conforms to a defined characteristic slope stored in the storage device; and

a selector for selecting a preferential one of a first coding parameter value and a second coding parameter value for coding the speech signal based on the determination.

27. (Amended) The system according to claim 24 where the evaluator comprises an averaging unit adapted to average the accumulated samples over the sampling duration to obtain the representative sample.

28. (Amended) The system according to claim 24 where the evaluator assumes the spectral response of a speech signal is sloped in accordance with the defined characteristic slope prior to the expiration of the sampling duration.